

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 25th July 2017 at Retford Town Hall

Present:

Councillor: J C Shephard (Chair)

Councillors: M. F. T. Critchley, S. E Farncombe, S. Fielding, G. Freeman, D Hare, G. Jones, G A N Oxby, D R Pressley, H. M. Richards and K Sutton.

Officers: J. Brassington, N. Taylor, E. Whittles and J. Wilson

Also present Councillor S.Greaves

(Meeting commenced at 6.30pm.)

(The Chair read out the Fire Evacuation Procedure, and also enquired as to whether any member of the press or public wished to film/record the meeting or any part thereof; however, no members of public were present.)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Councillors R B Carrington-Wilde, A. Chambers, D. Foley, and M. Richardson.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

(a) Members

Councillor M. F. T. Critchley declared a Pecuniary Interest in Agenda item 10(a) and remained in the meeting.

(b) Officers

There were no Declarations of Interest by officers.

18. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20TH JUNE 2017

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20TH June 2017 be approved.

19. MINUTES FOR ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

(a) Financial Outturn 2016/17 (Key Decision 638)

In response to a question on the financial information circulated to Members, it was agreed to seek further clarification on the £590,000 borrowing required to fund Retford Enterprise Centre.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Minutes for Action and Implementation be received.
2. The Head of Property and Finance provide further clarification on the funding of Retford Enterprise Centre.

20. OUTSTANDING MINUTES LIST

RESOLVED that the Outstanding Minutes List be noted.

21. FORWARD PLAN

Bassetlaw Community Health and Well-being Plan (Key Decision 635)

Reference was made to the draft summary document drafted by the Director of Corporate Resources, which had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting. The summary sets out the policy context for the plan and highlights the four key areas the plan will focus on. The draft plan is still being drawn up and will be presented to Cabinet in September 2017.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

SECTION A – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PUBLIC

Key Decisions

22. KEY DECISIONS OF CABINET – 11TH JULY 2017

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Simon Greaves and Chief Executive of the Council, Neil Taylor spoke on the following Key Decisions:

(a) Revised Sheffield City Region Consultation (Key Decision 530)

The Leader explained that the report to Cabinet set out the issues that have arisen since the Council made its original decision to pursue Constituent Member status of the Sheffield City Region (SCR). Since the consultation process in September 2016, the government was insisting that any elected mayor would have London style Mayoral planning powers; there has been no movement on voting arrangements for Bassetlaw, and the proposals for Bassetlaw National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) were not satisfactory. In addition, a period of further consultation was required to satisfy the Secretary of State. For these reasons, the recommendation of Cabinet was not to pursue the application for full constituent status of the Sheffield City Region at this time.

Bassetlaw District Council has worked within government policy at all stages and the decisions made were correct at that time. The decision not to proceed is the correct one at this stage. Also, Barnsley and Doncaster Councils have been looking at other options.

The Chief Executive added that Bassetlaw District Council has raised the technical issues of NNDR in the past and how it would work in practice with SCR, Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottinghamshire Police and Fire and Rescue Services. The decision process with DCLG has taken 6 months. Under the City Region pilot arrangements the Government's 50% share of NNDR would be transferred into a City Region Pool, but only 20% of that 50% NNDR share would be retained by Bassetlaw, despite it being raised in Bassetlaw. Retaining 20% of the Government's 50% (i.e. 10% of the total) of something that would otherwise go to the Government in the current situation has some merit. However, in any future 100% local retained NNDR situation transferring over 40% of all the NNDR monies raised in Bassetlaw to Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield to support their unitary authority service pressures there, with in effect, only 10% of it being retained in Nottinghamshire would disadvantage future upper tier funding here should there be any future moves to a unitary model of local government.

In response to questions, the Chief Executive and Leader explained that:

- Previous responses by SCR had not been technical answers to the NNDR question which Bassetlaw DC had pursued. Bassetlaw DC is a member of the Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pool and wanted this to continue. It was agreed that the information received from DCLG would be circulated to Members.

- Councils were encouraged to be entrepreneurial to deal with reducing resources and even though all the details of the SCR proposal were not in place, it would have increased resources to Bassetlaw. The Council was also working to a tight timetable to take the opportunity with the proposed Mayoral elections in May 2017.
- Members would receive details of the costs incurred by Bassetlaw District Council in the SCR devolution process and the Leader apologised for the delay in sending out the information.

RESOLVED that:

1. Minute No. 12(a) of Cabinet held on 11th July 2017 be endorsed.
2. The information on the proposals for Bassetlaw National Non Domestic Rates (NDR) received from DCLG be circulated to Members.
3. Details of the costs incurred by Bassetlaw District Council in the SCR devolution process be circulated to Members.

(b) Council Plan 2017 – 2020 (Key Decision No. 622)

Members were informed that the timetable for the Council Plan had been delayed by the General Election but was now being put forward for adoption. It recognised the need to operate efficiently and be financially resilient. The Council are well placed with a pro-active agenda for business growth and will continue to focus on building the local economy and encouraging neighbourhoods with housing for local people.

In response to questions, Members were informed that the national Business Rate scheme has been put back one year and currently no Council knows the financial position in 2020/21 and the schemes which are currently not completed in the existing Corporate Plan will be rolled over into the new Plan.

RESOLVED that Minute No. 12(b) of Cabinet held on 11th July 2017 be endorsed.

(c) Quarter 4 2016/17 Performance (Key Decision 640)

RESOLVED that Minute No. 12(c) of Cabinet held on 11th July 2017 be endorsed.

(d) Performance Indicator Outturn 2016/17 (Key Decision 641)

RESOLVED that Minute No. 12(d) of Cabinet held on 11th July 2017 be endorsed.

(e) Workshop Townscape Heritage Scheme (Key Decision 628)

RESOLVED that Minute No. 12(e) of Cabinet held on 11th July 2017 be endorsed.

(f) Welfare Reform Update (Key Decision 556)

In response to a question on the future plans of Bassetlaw District Council to deal with the impact of the full implementation of Universal Credit in December 2017, the Leader explained the support in place with a benefits officer to assess people's needs and signpost to the correct agency. In addition, the Council is a member of the Nottinghamshire Child Poverty Group with partners across the county including DWP. Councillor Farncombe had concerns about the system and victims of domestic abuse. It was agreed that the Chair would send a letter expressing Member's concerns about Universal Credit.

RESOLVED that:

1. Minute No. 14(a) of Cabinet held on 11th July 2017 be endorsed.

2. The Chair send a letter expressing Member's concerns about the full implementation of Universal Credit in Bassetlaw to DWP.

(g) Children and Young People's Plan 2016-2020 - Update (Key Decision No. 501)

RESOLVED that Minute No. 15(a) of Cabinet held on 11th July 2017 be endorsed.

(h) Equalities Objectives 2016-20 – Update (Key Decision No. 502)

RESOLVED that Minute No. 15(b) of Cabinet held on 11th July 2017 be endorsed.

Other Decisions

23. WAIVE OF CALL-IN/ DECISION TAKEN WITHOUT SUFFICIENT NOTICE

None.

24. POSSIBLE CALL-IN/ DECISION TAKEN WITHOUT SUFFICIENT NOTICE

None.

25. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

(a) Overview and Scrutiny Committee Programme 2017/18

Members were presented with an overview of the meeting programme for 2017/18, a Template for OSC Members to complete to suggest topics for inclusion in the 2017/18 work programme and a completed topic suggestion form for consideration for the 2017/18 work programme.

i. Extended Access to GP's in Bassetlaw Survey

In relation to Appendix A, the proposed Work Programme, Members were advised of a proposed addition for the September meeting. A. Beardsall at Bassetlaw CCG had e-mailed all Members about a current survey to extend access to GP's and all Members were being encouraged to respond by 31st August 2017. It is proposed to invite him to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 19th September 2017, to set out the result of the survey and possible commissioning proposals, so Members will have an opportunity to have an input before tendering in October 2017.

RESOLVED that Extended Access to GP's in Bassetlaw be added as an additional item to the Work Programme for September 2017.

ii. Additional Topics (Appendix C)

Councillor John Shephard proposed a review of the private rented housing sector in Bassetlaw and the role of the Council in the short and long term to address poor housing conditions and anti-social behaviour.

There was a discussion on the extent of the problems across the district: overcrowding; absentee landlords and impact on surrounding residents; Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and the planning process; role of Social Services and Environmental Health; lack of Affordable Housing and the use of viability of criteria by developers in planning applications and Neighbourhood Plans; perception that BDC does not use the powers that are available to Councils effectively, over reliance on private sector for rented accommodation; impact of Right to Buy and lack of new house building by the local authority housing availability for young people and Selective Licensing of private landlords.

Councillor Critchley explained that as a private sector landlord, she could provide the review with information on the legal obligations and regulations of landlords and financial constraints.

In conclusion, the discussion identified three possible areas to review:

1. Management and Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation
2. Development of Affordable Housing
3. Quality of Private Sector Rented Housing in Bassetlaw

It was agreed that there would be capacity to undertake a new scrutiny review in 2017/18 following the completion of the Review of South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Sustainability and Transformation Plan.

RESOLVED that:

1. The contents of the report be noted and Members contact the Policy and Scrutiny Unit should they have any queries regarding future meetings.
2. Members refer to Appendix B in relation to the Work Programme for 2017/18, complete the form, and return to the Policy & Scrutiny Co-ordinator for consideration.
3. Three possible reviews be considered to be programmed into future meetings - Management and Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation, Development of Affordable Housing and Quality of Private Sector Rented Housing in Bassetlaw

(b) Quarter 4 2016/17 Performance

Members were presented with the Quarter 4 Performance report which provides an update on the delivery of the Corporate Plan and the performance of a suite of key performance indicators. The report detailed performance indicators at exception level. The report had previously been presented to Cabinet.

In relation to questions raised Members were advised that the status of some actions could have changed since the report was collated. Long-term plans for the Town Centres will continue beyond 2017 in the new Council Plan.

Elected Members asked questions regarding:

- The extension beyond the original due date in relation to action 4.2.2.
- Improving the standard and quality of Private Sector Rented Housing - Private Landlords

RESOLVED that:

1. The contents of the report be noted.
2. Actions being taken to address performance that is currently off target be noted.
3. The actions suggested for continuation, as part of the development of the new Council Plan 2017-20 be noted.
4. Information be circulated to Members on the reasons for the delay in the delivery of action 4.2.2

(c) Update Review of NHS Bassetlaw CCG – Response from Cabinet

Members were presented with a report on Cabinet's response to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Report on the Update Review of NHS Bassetlaw CCG.

Councillor Pressley commented that there are currently no GPs in the north of Worksop and the CCG should investigate further, especially with the proposed new homes. It was agreed that this would be raised again with Bassetlaw CCG.

RESOLVED that:

1. The contents of the report be noted.
2. Officers monitor progress on the recommendations and report in twelve months' time highlighting exceptions to delivery.
3. The Head of Corporate Services will raise the issue of a lack of GPs in North Worksop with Bassetlaw CCG.

26. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

1. **RESOLVED** that, in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and after considering the public interest test as set out by the officer in the body of the report, Members agreed that the following items of business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3, and therefore, in accordance with Section 100A of the Act, the press and public be excluded from the meeting:

Agenda Item 22 Report of the Cabinet Member - Housing - Councillor S Scotthorne

(a) Temporary Housing Provision (Key Decision No. 637)

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE

Key Decisions

27. KEY DECISIONS OF CABINET 11th JULY 2017

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER - HOUSING - COUNCILLOR S SCOTTHORNE

(a) Temporary Housing Provision (Key Decision No. 637)

RESOLVED that Minute No. 22 (a) of Cabinet held on 11th July 2017 be endorsed.

Other Decisions

28. WAIVE OF CALL IN/DECISION TAKEN WITHOUT SUFFICIENT NOTICE

None.

29. POSSIBLE CALL IN OF DECISIONS MADE BY CABINET OR BY CABINET MEMBERS

None.

30. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

As there was no other business to be discussed, the Chair closed the meeting.

(Meeting closed at 7.55pm.)